Indiana
GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION
COUNCIL
140 N. Senate Ave, Room 306
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Coordination of Indiana GIS through dissemination of data and data products, education and outreach, adoption of standards, building partnerships and the IndianaMap.

ENABLING AN ENGAGED, INFORMED PUBLIC

Challenge

Web-based mapping can provide an easy, low-cost solution to data access challenges. It is an ideal method of providing information to a large number of people around the clock. Web access can also reduce the amount of time government employees spend filling simple information requests, freeing them up for other tasks. The challenge with new online technology is promoting its existence, educating the public on its uses and benefits.

Action

Wayne County and the City of Richmond introduced a website for viewing GIS map layers. When Wayne County officials decided to promote community awareness through "GIS Days," they planned a number of activities, including an open house, a front-page article in the local paper, and presentations to elementary school students. The events had a tremendous impact on the public's use of the site. The number of new visitors increased 1,200% per week. And over the next 6 months, the average number of weekly logins was up 150% compared to the prior 6 months.

Wayne County and the City of Richmond held GIS Days to educate the community and increase participation

Results

As a result of GIS Days, members of the public learned the value of online GIS, and integrated it into their lives and business practices. One case typifies the results. A local engineering firm attended the open house in Wayne County. After learning about its potential, the company requested copies of the GIS data from the County. It is now used in their Hagerstown office, where it has become an important decision-making tool for development projects.

According to one Wayne County Commissioner, **"GIS has always provided answers to our questions. In this time period we need to be making decisions with the most information available."**